

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 2, 10, and 18. Please amend Claims 1, 3, 7-9, 11, 15-17, 19, 23, and 25 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of error protection comprising:  
detecting an error during communication between nodes in a network, said nodes separated by a link;  
blocking further communication between said nodes in response to said detected error; and  
unblocking said blocked communication between said nodes, provided said communicating nodes have resolved said detected error, wherein said communication between said nodes is re-enabled; and  
setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween, and wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in Claim [[2]] 1 wherein said detection of said error causes a generation of an error indicator, said error indicator stored in a second storage element.

4. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 3 further comprises activating a blocking agent to provide said blocking of said communication, said blocking agent activated in response to said generation of said error indicator.

5. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein said resolving of said detected error is performed by each of said communicating nodes, and is in a manner appropriate for each node.

6. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 1 further comprises generating multiple clearing indicators by said nodes, wherein each of said nodes generates one of said multiple clearing indicators subsequent to its said resolving of said error, wherein each of said clearing indicators corresponds to an associated corresponding position relative to said nodes, and wherein each of said clearing indicators resets a link usage indicator set by each of said nodes.

7. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein [[a]] said first storage element and a second storage element are disposed in said link.

8. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein [[a]] said first storage element and a second storage element are disposed in each of said link.

9. (Currently Amended) A computer-usable medium having computer-readable program code embodied therein for causing a computer system to perform a method of error protection comprising:

blocking further communication between said nodes in response to said detected error; and

unblocking said blocked communication between said nodes, provided said communicating nodes have resolved said detected error, wherein said communication between said nodes is re-enabled; and

setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween, and wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) The computer-usable medium of Claim [[10]] 9 wherein said detection of said error causes a generation of an error indicator, said error indicator stored in a second storage element.

12. (Original) The computer-usable medium of Claim 11 wherein said method of error protection further comprises activating a blocking agent to provide said blocking of said communication, said blocking agent activated in response to said generation of said error indicator.

13. (Previously Presented) The computer-usable medium of Claim 9 wherein said resolving of said detected error is performed by each of said communicating nodes, and is in a manner appropriate for each node.

14. (Original) The computer-usable medium of Claim 9 wherein said method of error protection further comprises generating multiple clearing indicators by said nodes, wherein each of said nodes generates one of said multiple clearing

indicators subsequent to its said resolving of said error, wherein each of said clearing indicators corresponds to an associated corresponding position relative to said nodes, and wherein each of said clearing indicators resets a link usage indicator set by each of said nodes.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer-usable medium of Claim 9 wherein ~~[[a]]~~ said first storage element and a second storage element are disposed in said link.

16. (Currently Amended) The computer-usable medium of Claim 9 wherein ~~[[a]]~~ said first storage element and a second storage element are disposed in each of said link.

17. (Currently Amended) A computer system in a computer system network, said computer system comprising:

a communication interconnect;

an optional display device coupled to said communication interconnection;

a memory unit coupled to said communication interconnect; and

a processor coupled to said communication interconnect, said processor for executing a method of error protection comprising:

blocking further communication between said nodes in response to said detected error; and

unblocking said blocked communication between said nodes, provided said communicating nodes have resolved said detected error, wherein said communication between said nodes is re-enabled; and

setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween, and wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently Amended) The computer system of Claim ~~[[18]]~~ 17 wherein said detection of said error causes a generation of an error indicator, said error indicator stored in a second storage element.

20. (Original) The computer system of Claim 19 wherein said method of error protection further comprises activating a blocking agent to provide said blocking

of said communication, said blocking agent activated in response to said generation of said error indicator.

21. (Previously Presented) The computer system of Claim 17 wherein said resolving of said detected error is performed by each of said communicating nodes, and is in a manner appropriate for each node.

22. (Original) The computer system of Claim 17 wherein said method of error protection further comprises generating multiple clearing indicators by said nodes, wherein each of said nodes generates one of said multiple clearing indicators subsequent to its said resolving of said error, wherein each of said clearing indicators corresponds to an associated corresponding position relative to said nodes, and wherein each of said clearing indicators resets a link usage indicator set by each of said nodes.

23. (Currently Amended) The computer system of Claim 20 wherein [[a]] said first storage element and a second storage element are disposed in said link.

24. (Currently Amended) The computer system of Claim 21 wherein [[a]] said first storage element and a second storage element are disposed in each of said link.